

**SCRUTINY PANEL  
MINUTE EXTRACT  
18 AUGUST 2015**

**20. Year End 2014/15 Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan**

**Councillor Mike Lilley (in respect of being a board member of Colchester Borough Homes) declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 7 (5).**

Matthew Sterling, Assistant Chief Executive, introduced the Year End 2014/15 Performance Report. The report, which comes to the Scrutiny Panel twice a year, requests the Panel to consider the performance of the organisation to operate effectively and whether the proposed targets are sufficiently realistic and ambitious.

Matt Sterling stated that the report contains two sets of performance data, with both the Year End performance report and the Key Performance indicators. With regard to the Key Performance Indicators, Matt Sterling stated that there were 14 targets overall, with 11 categorised as green, and three showing as red. The first red refers to the Net Additional Homes provided, achieving 721 new homes, compared to the target of 1065. Whilst the target was missed, this was a high target to reach, and Colchester Borough Council outperformed all other Essex authorities.

The second Key Performance Indicator categorised as red was the household waste reused, recycled and composted rate. Whilst this target was missed, there had been an increase in the level of recycling over the past year. Matt Sterling stated that there were three strong quarters, however the final quarter dropped, considerably reducing the overall figure. The reason behind the reduction was a significant decrease in the amount of newspapers and magazines recycled, as well as a reduction in Garden Waste.

The final red category was Staff Sickness. This will now be a priority for 2015/16, with a firmer approach to persistent sickness cases.

The following issues were raised by Councillors;

- Councillor Cope – With regard to the housing target, what can Colchester Borough Council's do if developers aren't building new houses?
- Councillor Moore - Questioned how the commuted sum provides affordable homes.
- Councillor Harrington – Questioned the arrangements with collection of garden waste.

- Councillor Lilley – Asked whether the affordable homes target was too high?
- Councillor Davies – Asked for an update on the Waste Strategy.
- Councillor Hardy – Requested updated information on the number of tourists visiting Colchester.
- Councillor Young – Asked for further information on Colchester Works, highlighted the need to reduce the number of NEETS, and the importance of apprenticeships for care leavers.
- Councillor Harrington – How many fixed penalty notices were issued for littering cigarettes, and requested a firm approach to the issue of littering.
- Councillor Davies – Requested the 2013/14 figure of Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Councillor Hardy – Questioned the Town Centre investment figures, between the information included in the report, and a recent leaflet. Is it the £2m investment ambitious enough?
- Councillor Cope – Is there any update in making the bus companies use Greener buses?
- Councillor Young – Given the reductions required at the County Council's public health budget, is there anything that can be done on a Borough level for smoking cessation services?
- Councillor Cope – Highlighted the issue of dog fouling in the Borough, and responsible dog ownership.
- Councillor Davies – Questioned why the proposed targets for processing of planning applications were lower than the previous year's target.

The following responses were provided by Matt Sterling and Councillor Young;

- In response to Councillor Cope, Matt Sterling stated Colchester Borough Council has an enabling role to create the conditions for homes to be built. Almost all sites are completed by private developers, and whilst it's not a direct responsibility Colchester Borough Council will set the targets for the number of homes.
- The commuted sum is where private developers, who have committed to building affordable homes, are no longer able to do so and therefore provide a sum of money which contributes to building affordable homes on another site.
- In response to Councillor Harrington, Matt Sterling stated that information on the collection of Green Waste, particularly whether there are limits on collection, could be provided after the meeting.
- The target for affordable homes is set by housing planning experts. Councillor Young stated that there have been recent Government announcements that may force the targets to be re-written.
- Councillor Young responded to Councillor Davies question, stating that the Waste Strategy is currently being worked on. The plan is for the Strategy

to come to Cabinet in January after the public have been consulted. This can be scheduled in for discussion at the Scrutiny Panel prior to January.

- The figures reported are the most up to date, as they are provided after a full Calendar year to all Local Authorities. Early figures may be available and if so can be provided to the Panel, but the verified figures will not be ready until this time next year.
- In response to Councillor Young, Matt Sterling stated that Colchester Works provides employment and skills initiatives and brings together agencies helping those unemployed. In the absence of the NEET group it provides a good partnership work in the area.
- For the period April 2014/March 2015, there were 43 Fixed Penalty Notices for littering, of which three were cancelled but the remaining were paid. There were a total of 16 Fixed Penalty Notices for dog fouling, of which three went to court, but all were paid. In addition there were three FPN's for not having the correct waste documents, of which one was cancelled. Councillor Young stated that there is a firm approach to littering, and that fixed penalty notices will be issued.
- Figures for 2013/14 Fixed Penalty Notices can be circulated to the Panel.
- The £2million included in the report refers to welcoming the businesses into the Borough and the inward investment from the two companies Acoustica and Albea. The alternative information, which is higher, could include other forms of investment into Colchester such as the development of Williams and Griffin. Matt Sterling stated that the ambition is to always encourage further businesses into Colchester.
- Colchester Borough Council is in regular liaison with the bus companies to improve the cleanliness of the buses. Officers at the Council are aware of the pollution hotspots and the requirements to make the buses cleaner. The recent bid to improve the ten buses was a joint bid with the bus companies.
- Councillor Young stated that he had recently attended a presentation from Essex County Council regarding the smoking cessation services. Essex County Council are aiming to continue to provide the services with help from partners, albeit with a significantly reduced budget.
- Councillor Young stated that responsible dog ownership is extremely important. Officers would have to catch the individual who is letting their dog foul, in order to give a fixed penalty notice. Colchester Borough Council has a significant number of dog litter bins, and Councillors are encouraged to report the areas where dog fouling is taking place.
- In order to set the target it is necessary look into the year end result and balance that with the previous year's target. It is also necessary to remove any anomalies that may have occurred during that financial year. This allows for an ambitious but achievable target.

*RESOLVED* that;

- a) the Scrutiny Panel considered the performance, and the organisations ability to operate effectively,
- b) the Scrutiny Panel considered the proposed targets for next year.
- c) The Year End 2014/15 Performance Report including progress on Strategic Plan Action Plan be noted.